

THE HIEROPHANT:

OR

MONTHLY EXPOSITOR

OF

SACRED SYMBOLS AND PROPHECY.

CONDUCTED BY
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**No. II. JULY, 1842.**  
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**NEW-YORK:**  
**DAYTON AND NEWMAN, 199 BROADWAY.**  
**1842.**

John F. Trow, Printer,

No. 114 Nassau-street.



## BUSH'S NOTES ON THE OLD TESTAMENT.

DAYTON and NEWMAN, 199 Broadway, continue the publication of Prof. Bush's Critical and Practical Notes on Genesis, Exodus, and Joshua and Judges, five volumes in all, to which another volume on Leviticus will be added in a few weeks. This series of works, answering for the Old Testament the same purposes as Mr. Barnes' for the New, meets with the most decided approval from all quarters. The fifth edition of Genesis has recently been issued from the press, and the third edition of Exodus is just about to be printed.

The publishers hear of frequent instances where Sunday school and Bible class teachers are relinquishing all other commentaries for these, finding in them all they need for the purpose of explanation.

They learn also from the letters of missionaries engaged in translating the Scriptures into the languages of the East, that no biblical work affords them such important aid in that department of their labor as Prof. B.'s Commentaries. This is no more than the natural result of the author's careful study of the most scrupulous fidelity in eliciting the exact meaning of the original, and his peculiarly happy tact in explaining it.

In all the volumes above-mentioned will be found discussions on the more important points of biblical science, swelling far beyond the ordinary dimensions of expository notes, and amounting in fact to elaborate dissertations of great value. Among the subjects thus extensively treated are: in Genesis, the Temptation and the Fall, the Dispersion at Babel, the Prophecies of Noah, the Character of Melchizedek, the Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the History of Joseph, the Prophetic Benedictions of Jacob;—in Exodus, the Hardening of Pharaoh's heart, the Miracles of the Magicians, the Pillar of Cloud as the Seat of the Shekinah, the Decalogue, the Hebrew Theocracy, the Tabernacle, the Cherubim, the Candlestick, the Shew Bread, the Altar, &c.; in the forthcoming volume of Leviticus will be found a clear and minute specification of the different Sacrifices, the Distinction of Meats, the Scape Goat, the Law of Incest, including the case of Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, very largely considered, and a full account of the Jewish Festivals.

It would be easy to set before the reader a voluminous mass of testimonials to the value of this series of Commentaries, but the following notices from the Boston Recorder and the Portland Christian Mirror will be found applicable in their main features to all the rest.

"Many of our readers are, doubtless, acquainted with the Notes of Prof. Bush. For such as are not familiar with them, we indite the following notice. These Notes have reached a somewhat extensive circulation; but they are by no means appreciated as they should be. We know of nothing in our language which could take their place. They illustrate some of the most difficult portions of the Scriptures, and in respect to which the English language contains much less of valuable critical illustration than could be desired. Prof. Bush came to the undertaking with many advantages. He has long been a diligent student of the original Scriptures, and has become intimately acquainted with their grammatical principles, as his Hebrew Grammar abundantly shows. He is also extensively acquainted with oriental literature, antiquities, the manners and customs of the people, &c., as may be seen in his Life of Mohammed, and in the Scripture Illustrations.

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### THE MILLENNIUM AND THE NEW JERUSALEM.

(CONTINUED.)

WE endeavored in the previous part of this article to establish, by a conclusive array of parallelisms, the position, that a large class of texts cited from the prophet Isaiah and usually deemed descriptive of the Millennium, do in reality apply to another state, the New Jerusalem, which in the order of events occurs subsequently to the Millennium. But as the passages adduced from the Old Testament prophet are of such a nature as to *compel* us to interpret them of a *mundane* state of things, we are therefore forced *ex necessitate rei* to understand the New Jerusalem state also as one of earthly development, whatever purely celestial elements may be involved in it or superinduced upon it. This we regard as clear as that things identical with the same are identical with one another. But we have by no means exhausted the proof drawn from prophetic parallelism of the *terrestrial* character of the New Jerusalem. It is not necessary to have recourse solely to Isaiah, the evangelic prophet, to establish our point. Ezekiel speaks the same language, particularly in that remarkable portion of his predictions comprised in the last eight chapters, containing, among other things, the mention of the mystic river flowing out from under the temple, and having its banks beautified with a verdant growth of fruit-bearing trees, whose fruit was for meat and the leaves thereof for medicine. The gradual flow of this river is described as it issues out from under the sanctuary, continually increasing in depth and volume, till finally it swells to the amplitude of a broad and noble stream which

can only be passed by swimming. Then follows the passage which we bring into juxtaposition with a strikingly correspondent description of John.

## JOHN 22: 1, 2.

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

## EZEKIEL 47: 12.

And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

We are utterly unable to array before our own minds any reason requiring us to interpret these passages of two different future states, whether on earth or in heaven. To us they carry the indubitable marks of absolute identity. The term 'tree,' in the New Testament prophet, is undoubtedly a collective, as it is elsewhere, denoting a number. The 'street' (*πλατεια*) is perhaps the *broad place*, or open area, in the central part of the city, of which Daubuz (Perpet. Com. p. 1025) speaks thus:—"The throne of God and of the Lamb stood, I suppose, in the midst of the city, as it were at one end, or side, of the 'broad place;' for that throne being a seat of judgment, or court of judicature, is supposed to be as the *Basilica* of this city; which sort of buildings are placed near or upon the Forum or market place. The river of life proceeding from it ran thus, and divided the 'broad place' into two, by flowing through the midst of it; and then the tree, not an individual plant, but the whole species, or *wood of life*, was planted upon the banks of the river on either side." As the term *πλατεια*, however, in this connection is somewhat doubtful, the idea of *Mede* may be more correct, who makes it, not the main broad place of the city, but rather a park or paradise without it, after the oriental manner. This is rendered somewhat probable by the circumstance, first, that the city itself is represented as composed so entirely of gold that it is not clear in what manner trees could grow within its precincts; and secondly, that the words of Ezekiel indicate that the river flowed to a distance, deepening and widening as it went, and that the visionary trees were seen rather remote from its source. But however this may be, the items of the description are so palpably parallel, that we seem to be shut up to the necessity of recognizing the same substantial verity as shadowed out by both. But the closing chapters of Ezekiel, into which this significant vision falls, have never, that we are aware, been understood of a state purely celestial. Although it is a portion of revelation, the meaning of

which, and especially the *chronology* of which, has ever been a much disputed point among commentators, yet we believe the current of opinion among the learned sets mainly in favor of the idea, that it points forward to some remarkable phasis of that dispensation which is to occur after the conversion and restoration of the Jews to Palestine, which will probably be the seat or centre of a new spiritual polity, in which they shall hold a prominent place. This accords very well with the idea naturally conveyed by the title, 'New Jerusalem,' which would certainly suggest the admixture of *Jewish* elements in that economy, whatever it may be in other respects.

If then the fair and obvious construction appears to force upon us the conclusion, that the state depicted by both prophets is a state on earth destined to gladden and glorify the world's history in its later periods, the inquiry becomes urgently pressing, What is to be understood by the peculiar features of the scene as now presented to us? Of what is the Tree of Life symbolical? It is assuredly something which belongs to the New Jerusalem state, and destined probably to run parallel with its continuance. Now, as we shall endeavor to show in the sequel that we are actually brought, in the revolutions of Providence, very near to the borders of that great consummating period, so if our positions on that score are sound, we shall have no occasion to be surprised at the intimation, that the *reality* adumbrated by the mystic Tree may even now be beginning to disclose itself to all those who will interrogate their eyes.

We are firm in the persuasion that the New Jerusalem economy commences, in the more decisive signals of its establishment, about the time the Hallelujah chorus (Rev. 19: 1-7) begins to be heard in the symbolical heaven, and this, as we shall aim to evince, is not far from the passing away of the anti-christian power called Babylon, in the West, and the prostration of the Ottoman power in the East. We cannot then, we think, be far from the confines of that grand dispensation. Accordingly, we may reasonably expect to see things under the controlling Providence of God gradually shaping themselves into those forms and fixtures which shall at length stand before us as the *substantiated verities*, which, without fully understanding their drift, we had indeed been taught to anticipate. The sublime announcements respecting this state will doubtless go into accomplishment in the steady and scarcely observed tenor of *ordinary*, and not of *extraordinary*, providences. Such has been, in the main, the uniform analogy of the divine procedure in all ages. Omnipotence *has* miracles, it is true, at its command, but it does not usually resort to them when its ends can be effected without them. Accordingly, we are not to look for the events constituting the main features, even of the New Jerusalem, which 'comes down from God out of heaven,' in occurrences of a marvel-

lously strange, unique, and astounding nature. We are rather to seek them in those which stand directly before our eyes, and to which we become so familiarly wont, that we perhaps never dream, till emphatically reminded of it, that they are a part of the system of prophetic machinery. This remark holds, we conceive, pre-eminently of the Tree of Life, with its healing virtues. As we shall by and by show that there is nothing on the score of the *time* that should prevent our looking for its *incipient* realization even in our own days, let us see if there is any thing in the *nature* of the symbol itself which shall afford us a clew to its solution.

One thing is clear. It is an influence which is intrinsically not only *sustentative*, but *remedial* and *healing*. It has the effect at once of a *food* and a *medicine*; although in the nature of the case we do not hesitate to regard the maladies healed as *moral*, and not *physical*. It is some benign and balmy ministration, which is to exert its efficacy on the moral or spiritual diseases, wounds, and ulcerations of the 'nations,' or of extended portions of the human race. It pertains to earth and not to heaven.

Again, it is a genial, sustaining, and restorative influence which is to put itself forth *periodically*, and that too at *monthly* intervals. 'The tree shall yield its fruits every month.' This is an item in the description which may perhaps contribute very important aid in the elucidation of the symbol. It is clear, from the congruity of the symbol, that the interpretation of the Tree depends in a great measure on that of the River; for it is the fertilizing effect of the stream that produces the trees. If the River then be understood, as it naturally would be, and generally is, as will be found by consulting all classes of commentators, as shadowing out the gradual progress of Gospel truth, the silent but deepening spread of the principles of Christianity, we find ourselves driven to regard the Tree or Trees as symbolizing something which is the genuine product of Christian influences, and which will be sure to flourish in vigorous vitality just in proportion as those influences prevail. Apart, then, from any figurative or literal intimation to this effect, what should we say, reasoning from the very genius of Christianity, would be some of the most direct, and positive, and conspicuous of the benefits it conferred upon the race? Would it not exert itself in giving birth to the means of intellectual and moral culture? Would it not tend immediately to generate every kind of agency which should go to enlighten the mind, to quicken the conscience, and to develope the whole moral man? Acting on the truth of the inspired motto, that 'it is not good that the soul should be without knowledge,' the impartation of every species of useful or saving *knowledge* would be the very instinct of all its aims; but more especially of that knowledge of sacred and spiritual things which the Scriptures dignify with the name of *Wisdom*. Such we perceive at once to be the intrinsic character and working

of the religion of Christ. It is inherently creative of the means and institutions of mental and moral improvement. And we trust there is something more than mere fancy in recognizing this fact as taught by the symbol of the mystic stream flowing along and irrigating its banks, and making the soil productive of every salubrious growth. The Tree of Life in *this* Paradise is identical with the Tree of Knowledge; and to redeem the interpretation still more from the charge of arbitrariness, let us refer to a passage which goes directly to countenance and confirm it; for the keys which unlock the import of the symbolical diction are found scattered here and there promiscuously over the whole Scriptures, and often where we should least expect to find them. Solomon says of wisdom, i. e. the knowledge of the Holy, that 'she shall be a *tree of life* to thy soul.' This then establishes a connection between this tree, as a symbol, and that kind of *knowledge* which the religion of the Bible goes to promote. So that we are undoubtedly warranted in our main position, that this mystic healing Tree has something to do with the *impartation of salutary knowledge*.

Let us now advance a step farther, and inquire into the nature of that agency by which Christianity now produces, and will continue to produce, this benign effect. Is it not mainly by the medium of the *Press*—the *Christian Press*? Is there any instrumentality on earth to be compared for one moment with that of the Press in advancing the highest interests of man? Grant that it may be abused, and may propagate poison as well as balm, yet this is not sufficient to nullify its character as an agent for good. And is it not somewhat remarkable, that the issues of the religious Press in all countries have assumed so much of a *monthly character*? The recollection of our readers will at once remind them of a multitude of publications of this description, and yet there can be no doubt that the world is but in the infancy of its experience of the blessings flowing to it from this source. As this gospel river moves on its fertilizing way through the different regions of the globe, those healing trees will spring up as by magic, and a sanctified *Press* will be continually multiplying its monthly yieldings, like the leaves of Vallambrosa. Among the millions of China and Japan—of Hindostan and Austral Asia—among the Turks, Tartars, and Nestorians—all over the Islands of the Southern and Pacific Oceans—and throughout the frozen and forbidding regions of the North—will the untiring Press eventually be found scattering its precious emanations, loaded with life and winged with weal to the sin-sick nations. Is it not, then, in the *Christian Press*, viewed especially in its future growing ministry to the welfare of the world, that we see the substantiated reality of that Tree of Life which is to feed the mental appetite and heal the moral sicknesses of the coming generations of men? If the *river* of life represents the spread of the Gospel, and the *trees* spring up in consequence of its fertilizing

flow, to what *other* conclusion can we come? It is assuredly something which is the product of Christianity, and which goes at the same time to apply and perpetuate its blessings. We see not, at any rate, how it is possible to hold to the established and, we believe, correct interpretation of the purport of the mystic river, as shadowing forth the gradual spread of the Gospel *in this world*, and yet refuse to acknowledge the Tree to be a symbol of *something* which is the legitimate effect of Gospel influences. In identifying this, if any more probable solution can be proposed, we shall be happy to receive it.

Do we say of this particular feature of the New Jerusalem, as thus interpreted, and of the whole economy as thus presented, that it tends to lower—to unhallow—to degrade—that pure and un-earthly state in our estimation? This is very possible; but the solution proposed, if it *terrestrializes* heaven, *celestializes* earth; so that what is lost on the one hand is gained on the other, and the treasures of hope remain unimpaired. Every thing, it will be seen, depends upon the soundness of the interpretation which makes the New Jerusalem state *identical* with that state of latter-day glory described by Isaiah, the allusions to which are so familiar in every missionary address and in every prayer. If they are not the same, then it ought to be clearly shown, and the liability to a grave mistake of God's counsels precluded; and if our feeble voice could be heard over a compass sufficiently wide, we would call upon every theologian, critic, and commentator in Christendom, to suspend inquiry in other departments till the question was settled, to what state does the New Jerusalem refer?

It is obvious, then, that our subject rises and swells upon us with an absolute plethora of hallowed import, and identifies itself with all that is nearest, and dearest, and most sacred, in the hopes of the Christian church. The establishment of the New Jerusalem is the consummation of the mystery of God, and the founding of the indestructible empire of the Son of Man on the earth. Whatever has illuminated the visions of prophets—whatever has cheered the despondency of faith—whatever has animated prayer, or quickened zeal, or nerved exertion—whatever has awakened the raptures of pious anticipation—is embraced within the glorious futurities of that promised dispensation. It is no other than the realizing of those glowing predictions which announce the return of a golden age, to succeed and to recompense the days wherein the world has seen evil. Is it not then a proper, and a worthy, and a noble theme of study and investigation? Is it not sufficient to redeem this province of Scriptural inquiry from all odium and obloquy, that it brings us at once into contact with the most precious disclosures and the most solemn sanctions of God our Saviour? Away then with the reproach that is often cast upon the attempts to unravel the mysteries of unfulfilled prophecy. Heaven itself belongs to the depart-



ment of unfulfilled prophecy. The woes of perdition belong to unfulfilled prophecy—not merely because they are *future*, but because they are indissolubly connected with the chain of predicted events that lead to them. Are *these* matters which we may safely or wisely leave wrapped up in a shroud of triple darkness, simply because they fall into the field of prophecy?

The time will doubtless come—and perhaps is not far off—when the restless and reasonable questionings of sanctified human intellect will imperiously *demand* that the veil should be removed from these long-hidden mysteries, not from the promptings of a vain curiosity, but from the deep-laid impression, that high and solemn matters of *duty* are involved in them. Hitherto we think it will be admitted, that there has been an astonishingly lax, vague, floating, dreamy kind of impression conveyed by the visioned futurities which we are now considering. We are filled with amazement that the bare *possibility* of such results as we have stated being true, has not awakened the enlightened mind of Christendom—particularly of its teachers—to an absolute *agony of exegesis*. How can they consent, we ask, to let points of such overwhelming moment slumber, when it is possible, if the truth were to beam forth in its full splendor, that it would come upon the world with all the potency of a new revelation? Men would wake up into the conviction that God the Lord had spoken afresh to the ears of their own generation, and would all but dissolve with wonder. But let us not severely judge or rebuke the past. Many causes might easily be cited in solution of the apparent problem, and all truth was not intended for all times. There is often a *providential*, where there is not a *preceptive*, sealing of the voices of the prophetic thunders. But the time will come for them at last to speak out in their loudest tones,—the time when the ‘eternal blazon’ *must be*. Whether we have actually reached, or only approximated, that period, we will not assume to say. But we do not hesitate to propose and urge it as a question of commanding interest to all the preachers and propagators of the Christian faith, whether it is not at least *possible*, that there are wrapped up in these prophetic Scriptures precisely those elements of moral power, which are needed to bear upon multitudes of minds that are apparently inaccessible to the ordinary appeals of the Gospel. We speak not of the utterly heedless or avowed rejecters of revelation, but of vast numbers of the cultivated, the amiable, the worthy, the excellent of every Christian community, whose only fault it is, that they do not *feel* the ‘powers of the world to come.’ They are not awakened to the pulsations of a life divine—their benevolence is not quickened into a large beneficence—they are not deep sympathizers with the groaning and travailing creation—they are not prompt in grieving with the grief of burdened humanity—their noblest energies do not work genially in the line of a holy philanthropy—their most vivid in-

terests cluster round the *centre* and not the *circumference* of their circle. Though upright and exemplary in all the relations of life, and of unquestioned Christian character, still they are not truly and in the highest sense alive to the interests of Christ's kingdom on earth, and his chariot wheels drag slowly by reason of their apathy.—Now we say, that no one can affirm, that the disclosure of the prophetic mysteries, upon which we have now descanted, might not supply just that kind of wholesome incentive which should kindle sluggish duty into glowing zeal, and make 'the feeble as David, and the house of David as the angel of God.' Who shall say that the intelligent apprehension of what God in pre-eminent goodness and grace designs for the New Jerusalem, should not have upon uncounted multitudes very much the effect which, as we learn from history, the first sight of the old, the literal Jerusalem had upon the crusading armies of Richard? No sooner did the glittering spires and gilded domes of the beloved city burst upon their view, than the whole assembled host, moved by one common impulse, waved their banners and rent the air with a shout such as had never before sent its echoes over the mountains of Palestine. Would men so fired spread no terror among Saracen enemies? And would the soldiers of the cross, thus animated, fail to multiply the triumphs of their Lord over every region of the globe?

But we turn to the consideration of *time*. We may, perhaps, without presumption, assume to have shown that the Millennium, strictly so called, is entirely a different period from that which is brought to our view in the foregoing extracts from Isaiah and Ezekiel. This latter period we denominate, on the divine warrant, the New Jerusalem period. Chronologically it is assuredly posterior to the Millennium; but this fact of itself determines nothing respecting the *absolute* collocation of either, or of their relative distance from our own days. For ascertaining this we must, if possible, fix upon some data which shall serve as a clew to the commencement of the august era which we are taught to anticipate, and if the data in question should lead us to place this in the near vicinity of our own times, then we gain the assurance, of course, that the Millennial period, which precedes it in the order of events, has to be *thrown back into the past*. Such a clew we find, if we mistake not, in the Hallelujah chorus, Rev. 19: 1-7, which we here annex.

And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia: Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

For true and righteous *are* his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

An inspection of the order of the visions will evince that this eucharistic doxology ensues immediately upon the overthrow of the mystic Babylon, related in the preceding chapter. An event so auspicious to the church is worthy to be celebrated in the highest strains of holy exultation, and a pean is accordingly raised by the multitudinous voices of the hosts in heaven. In the Halleluia strain here sounded forth we recognize at once the הללו יה *hallelu-yah*, *praise ye the Lord*, of the synagogue, and the suggestion is, in our view, exceedingly plausible, that the use of the term in this connection hints at the conversion of the Jews, and the mingling of their voices in the songs and adoration of the Christian Zion at about this period of the world. In no previous part of the Apocalypse do we meet with the word, though ascriptions frequently occur, and as the *Hallel* and *Hallelu-yah* are even now a very prominent part of the Hebrew liturgy, the idea would seem to receive no small countenance from this fact, that at the time here referred to the Jews are actually to be gathered in great numbers into the church, and unite with their Gentile brethren in hymning the praises of Him 'who was dead and is alive forevermore.' But what is the time referred to? The destruction of Babylon has assuredly something to do with the downfall of the Papacy, and there is a very general unanimity of belief among all those who have made the prophecies their study, that this event, in the divine counsels, is not very far removed from the present time. We adventure upon no precise specification, but falling in with the current opinion of Protestant divines and expositors, that the event denoted by the overthrow of the mystical Babylon is not far distant from the present time, the inevitable sequence is, that the New Jerusalem, in its incipient era, is also near at hand. For it will be observed that in immediate connection with this Halleluia chorus it is said, 'Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: *for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*' But who is the wife of the Lamb? The question is answered by a reference to ch. 21: 2, 'And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, *prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*'

Here then we perceive the order of events. First, the destruction of Babylon, confessedly not far distant from the present time. Ensuing upon this the Halleluia pean, indicating the triumph of

the church, and the conversion of the Jews, who are restored to the church upon the overthrow of the mystical Babylon, very much as they were to their own country upon the capture of the literal Babylon of old. Then follows, in immediate connection, the establishment of that glorious economy, the New Jerusalem, here shadowed out under the emblem of 'the Lamb's wife.' The inference from all this in regard to the Millennium is obvious. As it precedes the New Jerusalem, and the New Jerusalem, in its commencing epoch, is in proximity to our own time, the Millennium *must* be thrown back into the past. Of consequence, the state of expectancy to the church is one of *unlimited* prosperity and glory, realizing and transcending the highest hopes of the pious mind, and involving elements which assimilate it very closely to the heavenly bliss. It will be little short of 'paradise regained,' the true golden age of the world. There is nothing, therefore, in the chronological relations of the subject which stands in the way of our beginning to realize, in their opening developments, the blessings of the 'tree of life,' as explained in the preceding pages. Indeed they are no more than we have reason to expect from the combined view of Providence and Prophecy.

But we pause at this point, although we have gone over less ground than we intended to compass in the present article. The reader, however, will find every deficiency supplied as we proceed.

B.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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## PROPHECY INTELLIGIBLE.

(CONCLUDED.)

WE have thus far insisted mainly upon the position, that there exists a willingness on the part of God that men should attain to a knowledge of the future; not indeed in unlimited measure, or to the extent that they might desire, but so far as may redound to their best good, and to the soundest interests of his kingdom on earth. This is in fact but saying in other words that no intrinsic obstacle exists, to the understanding of what God has revealed in his prophetic word. And however superfluous it might seem at first blush, yet nothing is more certain, than that such an assurance is requisite in order to countervail the deep-rooted impression in many minds, that it is utterly futile, not to say presumptuous, to think to grasp the import of what are termed these sealed and sacred Scriptures. It is, in their estimate, an attempt to penetrate inscrutable mysteries—to break through a solemn *tabu*—to encroach upon the province of Omniscience itself. This impression prevails especially in re-

spect to all attempts to solve the mysteries of *unfulfilled prophecy*.

As to predictions already confessedly accomplished, no one has any scruples. They are admitted to constitute one of the main grounds of evidence in favor of the truth of revelation—an evidence which amounts to a sort of perpetual miracle, which no candid or reflecting mind can possibly resist without doing violence to the most fundamental laws of human belief. No pains are spared to throw light upon the accomplishment of such prophecies, and any one has only to open the volume of Keith to see how largely the travellers to the East are made tributary to the illustration of the fulfilled predictions respecting Palestine, Egypt, Moab, Edom, Babylon, and the other places whose ruin was foretold and has been effected. But the moment we turn to the other department of the subject, alarm is excited, as though a kind of sacrilege were about to be committed. It is regarded as a presumptuous intruding upon forbidden ground, and a rash and reckless unveiling of the most sacred of all arcana. ‘Is it lawful,’ it is sometimes asked, ‘or at least is it expedient, to seek for a knowledge of things to come? Daniel was commanded to shut up the words and to seal the book which contained his prophecies; and John, when he undertook to write what the seven thunders had uttered, was forbidden. May there not, therefore, be some great presumption involved in all attempts to unlock its mysteries? May it not, for aught we know, amount to an interdicted prying into the hidden things of God, and a seeking to be wise above what is written?’

These are questions which are often asked by serious minds, and they deserve a serious answer. It may undoubtedly be granted that the manner in which the study of the prophecies has often been conducted, has led to the most fanatical abuses of the whole subject. As it is a theme of an exciting nature, it is not surprising that men of an ardent and sanguine temperament should be wrought up by it to a pitch of enthusiasm bordering on insanity, and in this state of mind should give vent to extravagant predictions of their own which time has falsified, and thus brought the whole subject into disrepute with the sober minded. There is no doubt that in this way, particularly when an attempt has been made to fix with minute specification the times and seasons of prophetic events, the subject has been degraded, in the estimation of thousands, down to the level of a mere system of biblical empiricism, of no more real claims to attention than the pretended skill of palmistry. Prophecy, in fact, in the hands of many of its professed expositors, has been regarded, and deserved to be regarded, as no better than a kind of political or ecclesiastical fortune-telling.

But all this is obviously an *abuse* of what is in itself good—sound—true—precious—and divine. Prophecy constitutes a very large portion of the sacred oracles. It is given for the instruction,



edification, warning, and consolation of the church; and we must not suffer the folly or infatuation of perverse interpreters to deter us from a proper inquiry into the meaning of *any part* of that volume which was written for our learning.

To aim at a knowledge of the hidden things of God—to seek for or affect a knowledge of futurity beyond what the word of God reveals—would be undoubtedly as vain and foolish, as it would be presumptuous and unprofitable. But the written prophecies of the Scriptures cannot be called the *hidden things* of God, and to study and search into the meaning of what *is* written, cannot surely be the same thing as endeavoring to be wise *beyond* what is written. The study of prophecy therefore—yea, of unfulfilled prophecy—is not an attempt to dive into the *secret things* of God, which it has been his pleasure to conceal—but simply to ascertain the purport of those *revealed things* which belong to us and our children. Were such investigations *unlawful* or *dangerous*, we might surely expect to find some intimations of it in connection, for instance, with such a book as the Revelation of John. We should expect it to open with some awful warning of the danger of misinterpreting or misapplying it, or even of meddling with it at all until it was fulfilled. But, instead of this, we have the most emphatic encouragement to engage in the study of it. On the very gateway of this temple of prophecy we read the luminous inscription, ‘Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.’ The Holy Spirit, therefore, has not seen fit to clog this department of revelation with restrictions. Had it been necessary he would doubtless have done it, and not have left it to fallible men to prescribe what portions of God’s word are profitable, and what not.

From what has now been said we may easily infer what is to be thought of the sentiment so often repeated, as a kind of inspired summary of all wisdom on this subject, and almost entitled to a place among the Proverbs of Solomon, that ‘Prophecy was never given to make men prophets.’ This apothegm rests upon an authority no less grave and respectable than that of Sir Isaac Newton, one of the most sagacious of all the interpreters of prophecy, and one whose fame as a theologian would have been far greater had his fame as a philosopher been less. The saying, backed by a name of such high repute, has passed into a current saw which scarcely any one thinks of questioning. In one sense it is not to be questioned. There can be no doubt that the Spirit of inspiration did *not* design, by giving us the prophetic oracles, to make us infallible expounders of their drift, especially in the minute details of time, place, and circumstance. We have no reason to suppose that it was his purpose to impart the prophetic afflatus, and to put the *readers* of prophecy precisely in the condition of its *writers*. Still we have no question that there is a fallacy in the saying, as usually

received. Was prophecy given to be *understood*? If it were meant to be *understood*, it is capable of being *explained*; and if capable of being explained, the very explanation is virtually a re-utterance of the prophecy; and whoever enounces the true purport of a prophecy may, in a qualified sense, be said so far forth to act the part of a prophet; and it were as reasonable to find fault with the echo which sound awakens, as to charge arrogant assumption upon him who in expounding the genuine sense of an inspired prediction is clothed for the time being with the prophetic function. But the question may easily be brought to the test of fact. The occurrence of the deluge was announced to Noah long before it happened. With what design? Was it merely, as many hold in regard to the drift of all prophecy, that *after* it had been fulfilled it might be interpreted by the event? Or was it not given that both he and his contemporaries might actually *foreknow* the divine purposes, and demean themselves accordingly? And when Noah was thus made acquainted with the will of God, and officially announced it, were those who heard him to forbear repeating his words, for fear of being scoffed at as prophets? Were the prophecies of the Messiah's first advent given only that they might be interpreted after the event? Were they not imparted to direct the hopes of God's people in waiting for the consolation of Israel, and to enable them to identify him when he came? Did not the Most High expressly announce the seventy years' captivity in Babylon, so that Daniel could say he 'understood by books' that the period was accomplished, and accordingly set himself by prayer and fasting to seek for the consummation of the promised deliverance? Finally, were not the predictions of our Lord relative to the destruction of Jerusalem so precise and definite, that the disciples then living were governed by them in retiring to Pella, and thus escaping the general doom of the nation?

But it is needless to enlarge. The whole history of the Jewish race is a continued array of evidence in proof of our main position, that prophecy was given in order to be understood. It is, indeed, couched in great measure in a dark and hieroglyphic diction, which it may require deep study to decipher, but the mastery of it is attainable, and the most profound researches in this department not only lawful, but laudable. We learn that when the exiled race of Israel had returned from Babylon to their own land and commenced the re-edification of their desolate city and temple, the voice of prophecy mingled with the sound of the hammer and the trowel in the progress of the work. 'Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: *and with them were the prophets of God helping them.*' Ezra 5: 2. At the present day the servants of God are engaged in erecting to his praise a far more glorious temple than the mere material structure of the ancient

Jerusalem, and we see not why the services of the *prophets*, that is, the *expounders of prophecy*, are not equally called in requisition. They may perform an immensely important part in ministering motive, direction, and comfort to the more active laborers who are toiling night and day for the uprearing of that holy house which is to shine forth as the perfection of beauty in the whole earth. In suggestions like these we have an ample warrant for prosecuting inquiries in the prophetic field with the utmost ardor. Grant that it is a department in which the investigator must lay stern injunctions upon himself as to the play of the imagination, which is so prone to run riot in the midst of elements so congenial. Still, it is certain that a large portion of the oracles of God is occupied with prophetic disclosures, and a time is clearly predicted when 'many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased;' that is, as the original primarily imports, shall run to and fro through the pages of a book, diligently collating one part with another.

Nor let it be charged upon this branch of scriptural research, that it is the mere indulgence of a *vain curiosity*. This is an unjust and invidious disparagement of a momentous theme of revelation. We may appeal to the calm intelligence of any reflecting mind, whether there is not something higher and nobler than bare *curiosity* in the principle which prompts us to look into the roll of destiny, and learn what is there said of the stupendous future which awaits our race—the universal triumph of truth—the uprooting of all pagan idolatries and all anti-christian despotisms—the conversion of Jews and Gentiles—the state of departed spirits—the resurrection—the judgment—the coming of the Lord in glory—the translation of living saints—the doom of the wicked—all which are unfulfilled prophecies, and matters embodied in the creed, however short, of every church in Christendom. Is the deep and solicitous research into these subjects to be set down to the account of mere *curiosity*? Where is a theme of *duty* proposed to us in the whole compass of Scripture, if it be not here? Where do we find the grand sanctions of faith but in the disclosures of prophecy?

But it may be asked whether the duty now affirmed be imperative with all classes of Christians, whatever may be their callings and circumstances in life? In this, as in every thing else, regard is undoubtedly to be had to providential abilities or disabilities in determining the claims of duty. So far as any Christian possesses the *means* of acquainting himself with every part of the word of God, he is doubtless bound to do it. But it is obvious, at a glance, that as the right understanding of many prophecies depends upon an accurate knowledge of the original languages of the Scriptures, and an extended range of research over the field of history, it cannot be expected of common Christians that they should gener-

ally be able to command the requisite resources for carrying out these profound inquiries. It would be requiring brick without affording straw, if in these circumstances it were demanded of them to enter into these investigations and solve the problems of prophecy for themselves. But though it may not be the *duty* of the mass of believers to cultivate this field, it is yet their *privilege* to be put in possession of the results of the labors of those who do. To whatever of sacred interest, of edification, of guidance, of comfort, may flow from this fountain, they have an unquestionable claim; and as they contribute to their spiritual teachers the *means* of prosecuting under high advantages these momentous inquiries, the principles of Christian equity, as well as the promptings of Christian love, would seem to constrain them to make common property of the harvest of prophetic truth which they may reap. B.

## COMMENTARY ON THE PSALMS.

## PSALM IV.

## Ver. 1.

בְּקֹרְאִי עֲנֵנִי אֱלֹהִי צְדָקְךָ בְּצֶדֶק  
 יְהִי רַחֲמֶיךָ לִי חֲפָזִי וְשָׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי :  
 Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness : thou hast enlarged me *when I was* in distress ; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

*Hear me when I call.* Heb. בְּקֹרְאִי עֲנֵנִי *in my calling answer me.* Chal. 'In the time of my prayer receive thou it of me.' The original word for 'call' properly denotes an earnest, fervent supplication, prompted by an inward urgency and vehemence of spirit. The Psalmist looked not for the blessings of prayer but in the faithful performance of that duty. He presumed not to hope that God would *answer* him unless he *called* upon him, as he had learned what God teaches us through him, Ps. 91 : 15, 'He shall *call* upon me and I will *answer* him ; I will be with him in trouble ; I will deliver him and honour him.'

*God of my righteousness.* Heb. אֱלֹהִי צְדָקְךָ i. e. God the asserter, vindicator, maintainer of my righteous cause. Gataker and others take the expression as equivalent to *my righteous God*, as a substantive in this connection often has the force of an adjective, as אִישׁ דָּמִים *a man of blood*, i. e. a bloody man ; אִישׁ חֵיל *a man of prowess*, i. e. a powerful man ; אֱלֹהֵי אֱמֶת *God of truth*, i. e. true or

faithful God. But the sense given by the literal rendering seems preferable, as the idea of *something effected or procured* is often involved in this form of expression. Thus שׁוֹר שְׁלוֹם *prince of peace* signifies him who *effects* peace; אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי *God of my salvation*, is the God who *provides* for me safety and deliverance. In like manner we may consider צְדִיקִי אֱלֹהֵי as equivalent to the paraphrastic appellation, 'God, to whom I appeal as the patron of my righteous cause, and who will bring forth my judgment as the noon-day.' In this view of the Psalmist's language he addresses God rather as the justifier of his *cause* than of his *person*.

*Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress.* Heb. בָּצַר הִרְחַבְתָּ לִּי *in straitness thou hast widened, or made room, for me.* A similar construction occurs, Gen. 9: 27, 'God shall enlarge Japhet (יִפְתָּה) יִפְתָּה לִּי shall enlarge for Japhet.' Gen. 26: 22, 'And he called the name of it Rehoboth, and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us (הִרְחִיב לָנוּ).' Prov. 18: 16, 'A man's gift maketh room for him (הִרְחִיב לוֹ), and bringeth him before great men.' Among the Arabians it is said to be a customary form of salutation to a stranger or guest, 'Enlargement be to thee!' So, on the other hand, when one is greatly embarrassed and perplexed they say, 'His land is straitened;' i. e. he has no freedom; he knows not which way to turn. David, therefore, in effect says, 'Thou hast in former days made bare thine arm for my rescue from the sorest trials and the greatest perils. When hemmed in and shut up on every side, thou didst graciously and strangely open a door of deliverance, and let the captive go free. Staying my spirit, therefore, with this cheering remembrance, I cannot but assure myself of thy continued protection.'

*Have mercy upon me.* Heb. רַחֵם. This word implies the bestowment of grace or favor without respect to, or in the absence of, all desert of good on the part of the recipient. As a sinner the Psalmist felt that *mercy* was the sole ground of his expectation; and the order of his words imply that it is God's bestowment of mercy that paves the way for his hearing the prayers of sinners.

*Hear my prayer.* Heb. שָׁמַע תְּפִלָּתי. The original word for *prayer* תְּפִלָּה comes from פָּלַל a judicial term signifying *to judge or determine causes*, and also *to intercede, supplicate, or make one's self a mediator between the judge and the criminal*, whether in one's own behalf or that of another, as Gen. 20: 7, 'For he is a prophet and he shall pray (יִתְפַּלֵּל) shall interpose himself,



or *intercede*) for thee, and thou shalt live.' 1 Sam. 1: 10, 'And she was in bitterness of soul, and *prayed* (הִתְפַּלֵּל *interceded for herself*) unto the Lord, and wept sore.' תַּפִּלָּה *prayer*, therefore, is the *appeal, intercession, or interpellation*, by means of which one places himself in the attitude of a mediator, suing for mercy and deprecating condemnation on the account of the criminal. From the same root comes פָּלְלִים *judges or arbiters*, occurring Ex. 21: 22, 'And he shall pay as the *judges* (פָּלְלִים) determine.' The Hithp. form הִתְפַּלֵּל is used to signify *praying*, because in that act the suppliant presents himself in the presence of his judge, and acts the part of an intercessor in his own behalf.

## Ver. 2.

בְּנֵי-אִישׁ עַד-מָה פְּבוֹדִי לְכַלְמָה  
תִּתְּנוּבֹן רֵיק תִּבְקֶשׁוּ כְזָב סֵלָה:  
O ye sons of men, how long *will*  
*ye turn my glory into shame? how*  
*long will ye love vanity, and seek*  
*after leasing? Selah.*

*O ye sons of men.* Heb. בְּנֵי אִישׁ. Though both rendered *man*, there is in many instances a marked diversity in the import of the words אִישׁ and אָדָם, the former signifying *men of rank, the great, the mighty, the distinguished*, while the latter is applied mostly to *men of inferior grade, the low, the vulgar*. Thus, Ps. 49: 1, 2, 'Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world, both *low and high* (בְּנֵי-אִישׁ גַּם בְּנֵי-אָדָם), rich and poor together.' Ps. 62: 10, 'Surely *men of low degree* (בְּנֵי-אָדָם) are vanity, and *men of high degree* (בְּנֵי אִישׁ) are a lie.' Prov. 8: 4, 'Unto you, *O men* (אִישִׁים), I call, and my voice is to the *sons of men* (בְּנֵי אָדָם); i. e. I call upon all ranks, orders, and conditions of men, upon the high as well as the low. So in the present case, the appeal is to the higher and more distinguished personages among the disaffected part of his court or kingdom.

*How long will ye turn my glory into shame.* Heb. פְּבוֹדִי לְכַלְמָה. The phrase in the original is elliptical, requiring the insertion of תִּתְּנוּ *will ye put*, i. e. render? or יִהְיֶה *shall be?* Horsley renders it, 'How long shall my glory be to my reproach?' understanding it merely as the language of a pious man, whose piety was the jest of his profane companions; or more particularly of a believer reproached and ridiculed for his belief and trust in a crucified Saviour. De Wette translates it, 'How long will ye scandalize my honor?'

supposing it to be spoken by David in a public capacity, and in allusion to the royal dignity which God had determined to confer upon him and preserve to him, and of which his enemies were intent upon despoiling him, whether by slanderous imputations or direct acts of rebellion. As the phrase כְּבוֹדִי *my glory*, Ps. 3: 4, is obviously used in reference to David's rank and power as a king, it is perhaps the import best suited to its connections here. Patrick paraphrases it by, 'How long will ye defame my government?' Whether, however, the words point to the calumnies and reproaches cast upon him by Saul and his nobles, or by Absalom and his adherents, cannot be determined.

*How long will ye love vanity and seek after leasing?* Heb. בָּזָב *a lie, falsehood*. In other words, 'How long will ye, rejecting the authority of your rightful sovereign, delight yourselves in vain, empty, and abortive counsels, as though the high purposes of heaven could be defeated? How long will ye suffer yourselves to be deluded in the pursuit of a vain phantom, and foolishly imagine there can be any thing real, solid, or substantial in any rival dominion ye may think to set up? It is all a fiction, a fallacy, a lie. Ye are wearying yourselves for a thing of nought.' The original רִיק *vanity* is applied to signify that which is *empty, inane, fruitless*, and בָּזָב that which is *false and fallacious*, in opposition to whatever is *true and substantial*, as in Ps. 62: 10, men of high degree are said to be *a lie* (בָּזָב), i. e. a falsity; a something not to be depended upon; that which fails and foils expectation. Both terms are here apparently intended to point to the vain attempts of Saul or Absalom and their abettors to overthrow the kingdom of David, and to establish another in its place.—'Leasing' is a word of Saxon origin, equivalent to 'lies.'

## Ver. 3.

וְדָעַי בִּיְהוָה חֲסִיד  
לֹא יִהְיֶה יִשְׁמַע בְּקִרְאִי אֵלָיו  
But know that the Lord hath set  
apart him that is godly for himself:  
the Lord will hear when I call unto  
him.

*The Lord hath set apart him that is godly.* Heb. הִתְקַלָּה *selected in a remarkable manner*. The scope of these words is to intimate to his enemies the reason why their rebellious enterprise would be sure to end in utter defeat and confusion. They were contending against the fixed purpose of Jehovah. David had been raised to

the throne by a divine election. It was to no fortuitous train of circumstances that he was indebted for the high honor. He had been in a remarkable manner, *singled out* and *set apart* from among his kindred and his countrymen as a candidate for this distinction, and the same Almighty power which had conferred the prerogative was pledged to sustain him in the possession and enjoyment of it. All this is strikingly indicated by the import of the Heb. term *הַפִּילָה* from *פָּלָה* signifying in Hiph. *to distinguish in a signal, illustrious, and wonderful manner*, in which it is closely related to *פָּלָה* denoting in Hiph. *the doing any thing in a marvellous or miraculous manner*. Thus Ex. 8: 22, ‘And I will *sever* (*הִפַּלְתִּי* *marvellously sever*) in that day the land of Goshen.’ Ps. 17: 7, ‘Show thy marvellous loving-kindness (*הַפִּילָה הַחֲסִידָה* *marvellously distinguish thy mercies*) O thou, that savest by thy right hand.’ Ex. 11: 7. The expression ‘hath set apart’ in the present case is equivalent to, ‘hath gloriously or honorably distinguished, discriminated, appropriated him that is godly,’ meaning thereby the Psalmist himself, and is perhaps but expressing in a single word the fact mentioned 1 Sam. 13: 14, ‘The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and hath commanded him to be captain over his people,’ with which compare Ps. 78: 70, 71, ‘He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: from following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.’ All the events in David’s life leading to his establishment on the throne were of an *unwonted* and *wonderful* character, from which he would have his enemies draw the inference that he was a special object of the divine tutelage and favor, whom it would be equally futile and impious to oppose. At the same time, the words undoubtedly state a general principle of the divine government, that the Lord has set apart the godly man for himself; and that having done so, he will watch over his interests, sanctify his trials, and avenge his wrongs. Gr. *θαυματοσς*; Vulg. ‘*Mirificavit Dominus*,’ Syr. ‘The Lord hath set apart his elect with a show of wonder.’

*Him that is godly.* Heb. *חֲסִיד*, *gracious, pious, merciful, or beneficent*. The original term, to which corresponds the Gr. *δαίος*, *pious* or *holy*, ordinarily denotes a pious, charitable, and beneficent person, though this is rather a secondary than its primary meaning. When spoken of man in reference to God it implies one who has received favor or mercy from him, and is tantamount to the Gr.

χαραριτωμενος, *one that hath found favor*. So Ps. 16: 10, 'Thou wilt not suffer *thine holy one* (הַסִּידִיךָ *thy favored one*) to see corruption.' But as one standing in this relation to the source of all goodness is necessarily moulded by it in his temper and disposition, it denotes also the active exhibition, after God's example, of a spirit *kind, gracious, benignant*. As uttered by David the affirmation was doubtless intended of himself personally, rather than as a general proposition, although as such strictly true. Only it is to be borne in mind that the 'godliness' is not the procuring cause, but the legitimate result of one's being thus 'set apart.'—Rosenmueller commends the opinion of Drusius, who considers לוֹ הָסִידִי as equivalent to הַסִּידִי *his gracious one*, in the same manner that צָרָה לִי *trouble to me* is used for *my trouble*. Gr. τοῦ ὁσίου αὐτοῦ; Vulg. 'Misericordem suum.'

## Ver. 4.

רָגְזוּ וְאַל-תִּחַסְאוּ אִמְרוּ בְלִבְבְּכֶם  
עַל-מִשְׁכְּבְּכֶם וְדַמּוּ סֵלָה : Stand in awe, and sin not: com-  
mune with your own heart upon  
your bed, and be still. Selah.

*Stand in awe, and sin not.* Heb. רָגְזוּ *be ye stirred*. The original verb denoting originally *commotion* or *agitation*, whether of body or mind, but especially the latter, here appears to signify that wholesome and holy dread of Omnipotence which the declaration in the preceding verse is calculated to inspire. 'Tremble at the power of the Most High, and dread *His* displeasure, though you may have no fear of mine. Think of the consequences of awakening his ire, and cease at once to sin.' The Gr., however, renders the phrase, ὀργισθεσθαι καὶ μὴ ἀμαρτανῆτε, *be ye angry and sin not*, which, as the Apostle has adopted the very words, Eph. 4: 26, is supposed by many critics to give the genuine sense of the original. But the Apostles in numerous instances adopted the words of the Septuagint version just as they found them, and applied them as their purposes required, without thereby assuming to decide whether they correctly represented the sense of the original or not. Their mere citation of the words of an ancient version is in itself no *sanc-tion* of the rendering. In the present case it is palpable that the rendering of the Greek is erroneous. For why should David command his enemies to be angry? What had he done to provoke their wrath? The true sense is doubtless that given above, and well preserved in the common translation, 'stand in awe, and sin not.'

*Commune with your own hearts, &c.* Heb. אָמַרְוּ בְּלִבְכֶּם *speak to your hearts, or within your hearts*; a frequent Hebraic idiom for *think, ponder, deliberate*. Thus, Ps. 14: 1, 'The fool *hath said in his heart* (אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ) there is no God;' i. e. hath thought or imagined. The Psalmist enjoins it upon his enemies to bethink themselves of their conduct. 'Take the tranquil hours of night, consider the matter coolly in your own minds, and be still; and when by sober reflection you have brought yourselves to a temper of due submission, then come and offer the sacrifices of righteousness; unite with the righteous in that worship which God requires, and however impious or refractory hitherto, yet henceforth put your trust in Jehovah.'

*Be still.* Heb. דָּמָו. This word denotes not merely *silence from noise*, but *cessation from action*, as Jer. 47: 6, 'O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou art quiet? Put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still (דָּמָו);' i. e. desist.

The entire clause, in connection with the next verse, is rendered by the Chal. 'Say your prayer with your mouth, and your petition with your heart, and pray upon your bed, and remember the day of death forever. Subdue your concupiscences, and then it shall be reputed to you for a sacrifice of righteousness.'

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

#### THE EXEGETE.—No. I

Col. 2: 8. 'Beware lest any man *spoil* you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.'

It is not perhaps known to the mass of English readers, that the word 'spoil' in this text is not used in the familiar sense of *injure, mar, corrupt, make useless*, in which sense in fact the word is scarcely ever used in our version of the Bible, but as equivalent to *making a prey*—'beware lest any man *make a prey* of you through philosophy and vain deceit.' The original word is *σπαραγῶν*, *one who carries any thing off as spoil*, from *σπλῆν* or *σῦλον*, *a prey, a spoil*, and *ἄγω*, *to lead away*. The term is of course usually applied to depredations upon one's *property* or *effects*, but here, by a striking figure, to *persons*. And so also Prov. 22: 23, 'For the Lord will plead their cause and *spoil* the soul of those that *spoiled* them.'



The same import of *preying upon*, instead of *injuring*, is to be recognized in the following passage. Matt. 12 : 29, 'Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house and *spoil* his goods, except he first bind the strong man? And then he will *spoil* his house.' In both cases the original here is *διαρπάζω*, to rob, to plunder, to take away by violence.

Jude, 3. 'Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should *earnestly contend* for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.'

The very common construction put upon this text, as enjoining an earnest *argumentative* or *controversial* contention for the faith once delivered to the saints, certainly comes short, or goes beyond, or shoots aside, of the genuine purport of the original. Not that such a mode of vindicating or upholding the great truths of Christianity is in any way wrong or liable to objection, provided the spirit of meekness and candor breathe through our writings. Neither do we consider it a violent wresting of the text to apply it in this sense; but we only say there is no evidence that this is the leading scope of the passage. The original *ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι* has the predominant sense of *agonizing*, and implies a *strenuous*, *fervent*, and *laborious endeavor* to compass an object which is environed with great difficulties. It conveys in this connection undoubtedly the idea of *earnest and assiduous striving* for the *practical* rather than the *theoretical* faith of Christianity, and does not necessarily imply any other adversaries than a man finds in the corruptions of his own nature. In a word, it is a term which would be equally appropriate to the duty of a Christian, even though there had never been a personal impugner of any of the grand doctrines of revelation on earth.

B.

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#### NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy.* By M. Stuart, Prof. in Andover Theol. Seminary. Andover: Allen, Morrill, and Wardwell. 1842. 12mo. pp. 146.

THE eminent services rendered by Prof. Stuart to the cause of biblical learning in our country—services highly appreciated abroad as well as at home—cannot fail to entitle him to a very heedful hearing on any subject connected with the *interpretation* of the sacred writings. In this department, if anywhere, he must be considered as *at home*, and as speaking with a degree of authority which the Christian community is predisposed to accord to him, and to which they will respectfully defer, till they become satisfied that his opinions and teachings will not bear the

test of rigid scrutiny. In that case not even the weight of a great name will avail to secure them acceptance. Whether the present publication is destined to add to a previously high repute in the walks of biblical hermeneutics, we must confess to very serious doubts. From a first perusal of the volume, we have risen with such profound misgivings as to the soundness of nearly every position assumed and every principle advocated by the author, that in the hope of finding ourselves mistaken as to his real views on the interpretation of prophecy, we have determined, before trusting ourselves to the vein of remark which was prompted on the first inspection of his pages, to institute a second thoroughgoing examination of the ground upon which he adventures to plant himself. The result of our inquisition we shall give in one or more of the future numbers of the Hierophant. We can scarcely resign the impression, that notwithstanding his stout oppugnation to the theory of a double sense in the inspired writings, there is one in his own; so averse are we to believe that the plain, obvious sense of his words is the true sense, though we fear there is very little consolation in store for us, from finding ourselves mistaken.

As at present advised we regard the book as a *very unsafe* guide to the inquirer after prophetic truth, and if written, as is implied in the preface, to counteract prevailing errors on this subject, we know not how to stave off an apt reminiscence from Seneca:—‘*Infelicitè ægrotat cui plus periculi à medico quam à morbo*; *that patient's case must needs be desperate, whose physician is more to be dreaded than his disease.* That cause must surely be in a bad way which has left to it only the sad choice of dying of its wound or of its plaster. B.

*A Critical and Historical Interpretation of the Prophecies of Daniel.* By Nathaniel S. Folsom. Boston: Crocker and Brewster. 1842. 12mo. pp. 231.

WE have space for little more than the bare announcement of this volume. It comprises an exposition of the *prophetic* and not of the *narrative* parts of Daniel. Like that of Prof. Stuart, it is written with a view to administer an antidote to the prevailing extravagances of prophetic interpretation. In our view, however, Mr. Folsom's work, like the Professor's, stands equally in need of an antidote. It is exceedingly in the style of the German rationalistic expounders, who appear to have a kind of *phobia* of every construction of Daniel's oracles, which would extend their scope beyond the first personal coming of the Messiah, and who are horrified at the thought that there ever was, or will be, or can be any worse Antichrist than Antiochus Epiphanes. We give Mr. F. credit for very considerable historical research, but as we consider him

in his applications of the prophecies to have fallen wholly short of their true intent, we admire his accurate scrutinies as we do any other fine intellectual effort that has no other fault than that of being altogether out of place. We are satisfied, moreover, that he has gone into the wrong cage to find the beast of the fourth empire, which he will by no means admit to be the Roman. The book, however, will scarcely fail to be acceptable to those to whom Prof. Stuart's commends itself. B.

NEW WORK ON PROPHECY.—The Rev. George Duffield, D. D. of Detroit, Mich., is about issuing from the press in this city a work, in two volumes, entitled '*Dissertations on the Prophecies*,' especially those which relate to the Second Advent. Dr. Duffield has been for many years a devoted student of prophecy, and from a cursory glance over several of the sheets we are satisfied that an elaborate and thoroughgoing discussion of this great theme may be expected in his pages. Not having become fully possessed of the distinctive features of his scheme of interpretation, we can pronounce no opinion upon his grand results. We understand, in the general, that he holds with firm conviction to the doctrine of the *pre-millennial advent* of Christ, which, without specifying dates, he regards as not far distant, and to the literal destruction of all anti-christian powers, by the brightness of his coming. We shall await with interest the appearance of the work, and shall take an early opportunity to acquaint our readers with the estimate which we are led to form of it.

B.

NOTES ON LEVITICUS.—The series of volumes which the editor has prepared by way of commentary on a portion of the books of the Old Testament, now amounts to five,—two on Genesis, two on Exodus, and one on Joshua and Judges. Another on Leviticus is now nearly through the process of stereotyping, and will be issued early in October. It contains, among other extended discussions, a full consideration of the question, on biblical grounds, respecting the lawfulness of marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

B.

"Some of the striking excellencies of his commentaries are the following. First, a faithful exposition of the text, according to its original meaning. We have no second-hand testimony, no transcription for the hundredth time, no miserable dilution. The Notes have the freshness which can be imparted only by a genuine scholar, who investigates fundamentally, and brings up the sparkling native ore; at the same time, there is no unnecessary pretension of the original, nor depreciation of the English version. That venerable, and on the whole, excellent translation, is treated with all due respect.

"Second, There are copious and very apposite illustrations from the valuable productions of the old writers, not now much known. Such are the works of Vitringa, Venema, Pool, Lightfoot, Bochart, Le Clerc, &c. Curious and pertinent comments are drawn from the Targums and other Jewish productions.

"Third, Practical and critical remarks are duly proportioned. The work is not one of mere learning. Mr. Bush's practical observations strike us as uncommonly apt, and not unfrequently original. They are not, however, obtruded upon us. They are not, in general, such as would arise in the mind of a casual reader. They are sometimes suggested by texts which would not at first view seem to furnish much spiritual nutriment. Our attention is thus kept awake; and our moral feelings are benefited, while our minds are instructed. Not a few of the remarks show that the writer has a rich experimental acquaintance with the inspired pages; that he does what a biblical interpreter ever should do, sympathize with the spirit of that which he professes to expound."—*Boston Recorder*.

"Those who are acquainted with Prof. B.'s former works on Genesis and on Joshua and Judges will need no other assurance, as to the great value of these volumes, than that they are executed on the same plan and are every way worthy of being ranked by the side of their predecessors. For close critical investigation of the sense of terms and phrases, for diligent research into Eastern manners and customs, and a lucid, happy mode of presenting to common readers the results of the most profound inquiries, Prof. B. has no superior. When we add to this, that he loses no opportunity of grafting the most pertinent, moral, and practical reflections upon the texts which he explains, we have perhaps given to his works about the highest praise to which a commentary on the Scriptures can lay claim. To this praise we have no doubt the five published volumes of Prof. B. on the Old Testament are amply entitled; and we are happy to learn, from the republication of the whole series in England, that his critical labors are no less highly appreciated in that country than with us at home. The work on Exodus is distinguished by one feature which scarcely appears in that on Genesis, although it is true there is less occasion for it; we allude to the great number of illustrative cuts designed to make intelligible the descriptions of the various items of sacred antiquity, such as the Tabernacle with its furniture, the dresses of the Priests, &c., all of which the reader will find most graphically and accurately portrayed in these pictorial views. On the whole we cannot but think that the religious public, particularly the teachers and pupils of Bible Classes, are greatly to be congratulated on the appearance of this very valuable contribution to biblical science."—*Christian Mirror*.



## NOTICE.

THE HIEROPHANT is designed as a monthly publication, devoted mainly to the subject of Scripture Prophecy, but embracing in its plan other topics of biblical exposition. The Editor's engagements are such that he cannot at present promise a very regular issue of the numbers at the stated intervals. His subscribers, however, may depend on receiving the twelve during the year. They will be published with more rapidity by and by.

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